



The Cotati Independent

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Cotati Visitor Center Fiasco

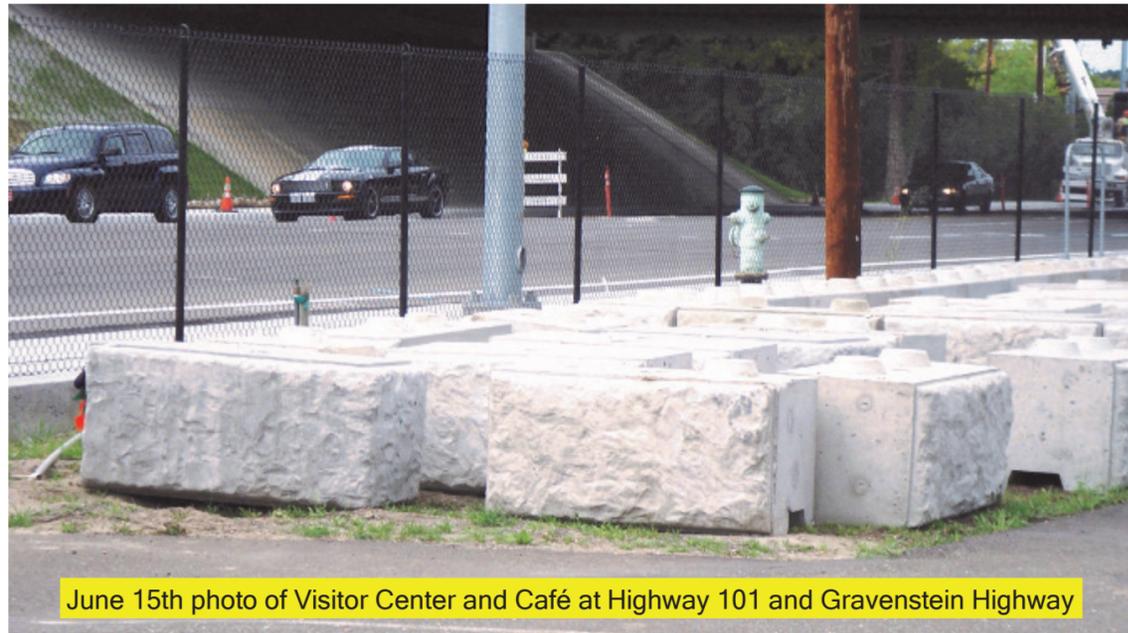
Story and opinion by George Barich

(Cotati, CA) Cotati has yet another huge eyesore on its hands as you drive through the busiest interchange in the city. The new Visitor Center and Café located just next to the freeway on Gravenstein Highway in Cotati has been struggling for months now dealing with Cotati City Hall, according to its owner. The owner, who requests his

name not be used here, says he has bent over backwards and followed the law by informing the city of his remodeling efforts every step of the way. But that did not stop the city from ordering that he tear down the concrete block wall he had built. The owner of the Visitor Center says he got verbal permission from the city planning dept. to build a concrete wall to shield his customers from

the roar of the traffic so that live music could be performed outside in the courtyard. The owner claims he was forced to take down the huge cement wall, but not before spending thousands of dollars putting it up to perfection. The city now claims the wall in question was illegal from the start, and the city was in the right to demand it be taken down immediately and wants all permit fees

paid. "Not so", says the owner, who said he had numerous face to face meetings with the planning department who gave him the green light to build the wall. He is now furious because he says the city is clearly to blame for the mess of him paying a contractor to take the wall down which is now visible to thousands of tourists and motorists each day. **-Continued on Page 10**

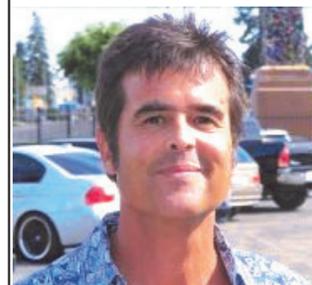


June 15th photo of Visitor Center and Café at Highway 101 and Gravenstein Highway

Cotati City Leaders Could Be Held Criminally Liable for Misprison of Treason

Story and opinion by George Barich

(Santa Rosa, CA) Jim Bennett, local activist, businessman and resident of Santa Rosa, has put the City of Santa Rosa on notice of a criminal act, and cities like Cotati are next on his list. Bennett, along with a group of concerned citizens, have taken it upon themselves to do what local law enforcement won't: charge the City of Santa Rosa with entering into treaties and compacts with foreign entities, which is against the law and an act of Misprison of Treason.



Jim Bennett

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City Manager Sends Insulting Letter to Unemployed Homeowner; Mayor and City Council Still Remain Silent on Property Transfer Tax Overcharges

Story and opinion by Greg Karraker

(Cotati CA) The old phrase "Adding insult to injury" is one that anybody doing business with Cotati City Hall is familiar with. Here is the most recent example of the city's uncaring attitude:

For several months, local newspapers, including this one, have run stories about the City of Cotati charging home sellers a Document Transfer Tax nearly three times greater than California law allows. This practice continued from October 1990 to October 2011, a span of 21 years.

One Cotati homeowner heard about this abuse and sent a polite letter to the city council on March 12, 2012. She described her real estate transaction and asked if she might be entitled to a refund. She also asked if she could have an answer within 10 days.

To make matters worse, she is unemployed, and had been for nearly a year, so every dollar that might have been due to her would have meant a lot. A little kindness and respect from the city would have helped, too. But on May 17, 2012, almost nine weeks later, below is the letter she received from City Manager Dianne Thompson:

Dear Ms (NAME WITHELD)

The City is in receipt of your inquiry/claim for a refund of documentary transfer tax. Although there are not other grounds for rejection that are not obvious from the information you have provided, please be advised that, in any event, your claim is hereby rejected on the grounds that it is untimely in that is barred by the applicable statute of limitations.

Sincerely,

Dianne Thompson
City Manager

Look at this curt letter (left, below carefully for words like: "We're sorry, but..." "we understand your concern..." or any other words that demonstrate a scrap of empathy or common courtesy for a city that overcharged for decades. Then look again and see if it even spells out what the statute of limitations is.

Mayor Harvey (below) refuses to criticize City Manager's rude behavior



At the city council meeting on June 13, 2012, during "Citizen's Business" (where anyone has three minutes to verbally address the council on anything), I described the unfortunate citizen's problem to the city council, then read the letter stating that I found it to be rude, arrogant, and certainly not the way a decent city should treat its citizens.

I then asked City Attorney Rich Rudnansky if he could tell everyone in attendance what the statute of limitations is for document tax transfer overcharges. The city attorney refused to comment.

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Owners of The Jelly Doughnut Says They're Back and Better Than Ever.

Serena, Johnny, and Linda are glad to be back in Cotati to serve you. Call 707-795-8361 or stop in at 8575 Gravenstein Highway in Cotati. Hours: 3AM to 2PM. Sundays, we open at 5AM.



Cotati Man Files Formal Complaint Against Cotati Poll Workers Who Targeted Republicans for Ridicule

Story by George Barich

(Cotati, CA) Charges of voter intimidation and harassment have been lodged and filed with the Sonoma County Registrar of Voters against those who manned the voting place at the Cotati Veteran's Hall on June 5th, 2012.

Michael Whitley, resident of Cotati, claims Republicans were deliberately singled out for ridicule and made fun of by poll workers in Cotati in an act of discrimination and intimidation. A full copy of the letter is reprinted on Page 4. One of our readers who resides in Cotati

and works the polls in Sebastopol told us that upon learning of this incident she requested she be reassigned to Cotati in November to help see that this type of harassment doesn't happen again in our town. She said, "A friend of mine told me that the workers in one of the polling places in Cotati were calling out 'Raspberry' if the voter was a Republican, and it caused a lot of consternation with the voters."

-Continued on Page 4

Citizens' Complaint Embarrasses City into Evicting 20 Chickens

Story and opinion by Greg Karraker

(Cotati, CA) After a few years of trying politely to convince the city council and city staff to rethink a number of their bad policies, I have learned there is only one real way to make them change anything: Present your complaint to the city in the most public way possible. Make sure that a newspaper or two

are present. Then describe exactly how the city's failures are too blatant to ignore, and hope you can embarrass them into doing the right thing. I know that may sound harsh, but sometimes it actually works.

-Continued on Page 4



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Vote for Only One Councilmember in November and Make Your Vote Count

This November there will be three seats up for grabs on the Cotati City Council. No matter how many people run for city council, each registered voter in Cotati gets three votes to cast for this city race. The problem is, a lot of people think they have to vote for at least three of however many are on the slate or their ballot will be disqualified. This is not true.

The fact is, you DO NOT have to cast all three of your votes. Voting for three candidates might do more damage than good. How so? If you have a favorite candidate you want to see get elected, voting for any of the other two candidates on the ballot will actually hurt the chances of the person YOU WANT to see elected.

If you really want your vote for Cotati City Council members to count this fall, pick one candidate and only that one candidate. Throw your other two votes away. Doing that is actually like giving your candidates extra votes by NOT voting for the other guys.

It was Albert Einstein who said it best: "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

Cotati is suffering from years of mismanagement, incompetence, and political correctness gone wild. The high-tech lynch mobs and racists at City Hall brought great shame to our town thanks to the Cotati Chamber of Commerce who were given their marching orders to get rid of diversity on the city council anyway possible or face having their funding cut. This is the absolute truth.

Cotati is a city in decline thanks to city leaders spending more time and resources on finding free handouts than making Cotati an economically strong, vibrant, sustainable municipality. Now, Cotati can't fix what needs to be fixed at the rate the infrastructure is deteriorating, so says Cotati's own city engineer. Our police chief does not have the funds to keep our city safe and has resorted to leasing new police cars because he does not have the funds to buy them outright. He doesn't even have time to write a monthly column for me about public safety.

The city has wasted millions on consultants over the years on plans that sit on the shelf waiting for bailout money from Washington DC as they refuse to apologize for their failures. Cotati's Recreation Department has been all but shut down due to a lack of funds, funds that were diverted to support a 3% pay increase for all Cotati employees just last year.

Current city officials refuse to televise the city council and planning commission meetings on public access TV because they insist Cotati be a black hole for information in order to consolidate power and discourage public participation at public meetings. Those who did come to Cotati city meetings for many years looking for "free stuff", advocating taking free money "wherever it may be hiding" don't even show up anymore to be heard. Even they know the city doubled down on bailout mania and see now that none of this freeloading mentality was sustainable. The day of reckoning has arrived and it's not pretty.

City revenues are down, yet city revenue projections are up as a way to make the city budget appear balanced, a common political ploy to get re-elected. Desperately needed repairs to the city are routinely omitted from the city budget in order to make the budget appear to be balanced and are why the city budget does not reflect the reality of the financial state of our town. These people play games with the numbers for their own political expediency because all they care about is making it successfully through the next election cycle, keeping their campaign promises to their supporters and paying back people like Prue



Former Cotati City Councilman
George Barich

"Just My Two Cents"

Draper of The Cotati Historical Society for all she did to help them all get elected to public office.

I don't beg people like Prue Draper for their blessing and support because I refuse to dance the dance. I don't make deals when it is clearly wrong to do so. I don't make promises I can't keep. I won't be another bought and sold Cotati politician. I may not get elected, but I have my pride. As a councilman, I worked right along side the most far-left socialists this town had to offer until it was almost unbearable. But when the pressure became too great and I wouldn't roll over and come over to their side to increase sales taxes in Cotati, or sign onto letters to Obama begging for more money, it was the far left in Cotati who demonstrated their hatred and intolerance for anyone they disagreed with by conducting a silly and dishonest recall election.

I have had the pleasure of answering all of my emails with compassion and lengthy responses to the questions especially from the far leftists in town. I have answered all of their phone calls all hours of the day and night and have given the extreme liberals first rate service they demand and deserve. I have smiled to them when they yelled at me during campaign season to go away and never come back. I have watched Cotati police officers and our city employees hold signs up to have me removed from office because I



fought for even bigger city pay cuts to really and truly balance the city budget. I have seen the face of intolerance and racism in Cotati. I have seen a 70 year-old council member walk up and down the streets of Cotati in the heat of summer and argue "George Barich will not go along with the rest of us. George Barich is an obstructionist to all that we have planned for Cotati, including raising taxes. He is embarrassing us... We simply can't work with him. He has to be recalled.... Please sign this petition.... And by the way, did you know he is a racist?...".

Cotatians, you have a choice this November. You can vote for the incumbents who have proven they will not tolerate diversity on the Cotati City Council. You can vote for those who will attempt to keep a strong grip on power and do and say almost anything to insure their reelection. You can vote for those who talk out of both sides of their mouths, refuse to take calls from this newspaper, and refuse to answer our emails to bring you the news. You can vote to keep a city manager who sits and hides in her office and makes sure our newspapers cannot be displayed next to the Community Voice newspaper at City Hall. You can vote for numerous traffic roundabouts the city has no money for and few people want in hopes the federal government will come to our rescue if we scream loud enough that we're broke.

You can vote for a city council that makes the police K9 unit go out to the public for donations to feed and train the dog while it continues to pay outrageous dues to ICLEI and other far left organizations like the League of California Cities that actually give seminars on how to get around The Brown Act and how to legally get around providing information to the public.

You can continue to read about businesses and jobs leaving Cotati because of the over-regulation, the brutal nastiness of our city planning department, and the nitwits on the planning commission who are out of control putting applicants through pure Hell.

You can vote for those who will use the city attorney to harass elected officials like me for using the city logo on my web blog which is my legal right, the same logo they printed on my business cards they gave me to hand out to everyone one I meet on the street. Or, you can vote for common sense, fiscal responsibility, commitment to service to the community, and someone who will act in the public trust. Use your votes wisely. Choose only one person for Cotati city council. Use that one vote and make a difference!

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Temporarily Out of Service

By Eric Kirchmann
Cotati

I was walking into a resort this morning, not in Cotati obviously, and read the sign Temporarily Out of Service displayed on a wheelchair lift. The sign had been displayed for four days that I can report. Luckily there are backup plans and this is not the only entrance. Traffic can be diverted as easily in hotels as our City of Cotati staff would convince us that traffic can be diverted here.

After years of study and over a million dollars of taxpayer money, our Downtown Specific Plan (DSP) reads "status quo keep what we have." After a half million dollars more and too many consultant reports, we are told that the Downtown Specific Plan is not feasible and roundabouts are the ready solution. Traffic calming in Cotati thus far has not been a true success and our elected officials blame the car drivers as the problem. Well we have new city staff as the old has moved on, but with Oliver's Market becoming fed up with the Thompson handshake, one has to wonder what economic development is truly going

to take place. Commercial zones like Old Redwood Highway and Hwy116 are being filled with condos or simply remaining vacant. There is no plan to have more cash registers ringing up more sales. That is economic development folks - more retail outlets ringing up more sales. Not diverting traffic away from town and retail options.

We all make mistakes and I need to share with you a few major ones made in the past few months. First let me share some stats with you as we all enjoy sports and things bigger and better than our daily struggles. In the real world you have to get to the plate to swing the bat, and sometimes you strike out; that's part of the game. Some of you will recall these names from yesteryear. After over fourteen thousand at bats; Sammy Sosa and Jose Conesco struck out over nineteen hundred times and Reggie Jackson struck out more than twenty five hundred times in the same number of at-bats. The point is that you don't always round third base. Sometimes it is your fault and some times it is what is thrown at you. I was writing about the flawed Cotati Northern Gateway Plan and how Orin Thiessen, the proposed developer, has dropped from sight into bankruptcy and local developers are scrambling to stay upright. I meant to say that Joel, of Joel and Ron's Harmony Garage, was meeting some challenges with his developer partner Paul. The article printed Ron's name instead of Paul's and this might have been my mistake or not but it was printed and I did not mean to imply that Joel and Ron were not getting along... I was trying to illustrate that Cotati city staff decisions and perspectives do impact actual business interests in our city and do impact economic de-

velopment, and do actually cost business interests real money, and encourage them to go where it is easy to do business.

I now have to clarify another mistake made in print when I listened to what I thought was a reliable source without checking facts. Some months ago I asked if anyone had seen Andre Morrow an insurance broker coincidentally working from Joel's Old Redwood Highway retail center, The State Farm Insurance office was closed and there was no forwarding address and seemingly no one knew where Mr. Morrow had gone. I reported this but in error I reported that Andre had vanished and was no longer involved with our Chamber of Commerce or doing business in Cotati. I saw Mr. Morrow last Thursday at our Farmer's Market and he assured me that he is as involved as he has ever been with the Chamber and the city. I feel I need to report the truth as I stand corrected: Andre Morrow was visible at last Thursday's Farmer's Market, He is as involved as he has ever been with Cotati and the Chamber. He no longer does business in Cotati but is an officer of the Chamber and is involved. I can attest to this as I saw Mr. Morrow at La Plaza Park. I didn't see Cotati City Manager Diane Thompson or any city staff members. I didn't see any of our local elected officials, no mayor, no vice mayor, no councilmembers, and no high-priced city staff. I didn't see Cotati's economic development director or finance director, etc. I guess they are too busy keeping our small town character. Perhaps they are temporarily out of service...



Servant or Master?

By Mike Cerremello, Councilmember, Dixon, CA

It would be my wager that most of us are not willing to be ruled, yet we are too apathetic or distracted to come to the realization that this is the ultimate desire and goal of others who would enslave us. Whether the chains are iron or floral weaves doesn't make much difference. The political class intends to strip you of your freedoms while letting you retain minor decisions to assuage your fears of their dominance.

The word "politician" has always held a negative connotation. That would come from direct observation of exactly how they operate. It doesn't make a difference based on the sex of the individual. Incompetence doesn't recognize sexuality or gender. It seems others have similar views.

"Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it whether it exists or not, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedy", Ernest Benn. Not a bad quote coming from an English liberal aristocrat.

Something a little more pertinent for today's Obama supporters to think about comes from Joseph Sobran who said, "Politicians never accuse you of 'greed' for wanting other people's money - only for wanting to keep your own money." Sobran, who is deceased, was an interesting educated man, a Catholic, a closet Holocaust denier, and a constitutional libertarian: rather divergent positions but definitely debate oriented.

Going a little further back in our history, we can find quotes from Congressman David Crockett who referred to politicians as "poly-ticks ... blood suckers all" and Samuel Clemens a.k.a. Mark Twain, "There is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress." This points to the fact that for centuries people have attained these positions for the wrong reasons and manifested their base interests, or selfish interests, conclusively.

Some final thoughts for your consideration are quotes from Thomas Sowell, a prolific writer and philosopher of current times. "There is nothing so bad that politics can't make it worse." "In politics, the truth is strictly optional and that also seems to be true in parts of the media." Directly to the point is this, "If politicians quit meddling with things they didn't understand, there would be a more drastic reduction in the size of government than anyone in either party advocates."

When looking up the actual word politician, the first definition is the more benign "one versed or experienced in the science of government." This is followed by "one addicted to, or actively engaged in, politics as managed by parties; often, one primarily interested in political offices or the profits of them as a source of private gain." Reality is sooooo negative but negativity is still in the eye of the beholder.

This large yet barely tapped volume of criticism of the body politic demonstrates exactly why I personally do not appreciate being called a "politician". Frankly it is not because of the accuracy of the public's distaste, it is because the definition doesn't apply to all in the field of governance. In searching for the appropriate description of what I have always intended to accomplish in my endeavors, I came upon the word "statesman".

When I first examined the basic meaning of statesman,

I was taken aback by its similarity to a politician albeit expanded to include the "wisdom" in dealing with public affairs. Continuing my search I found a definition equating politicians and statesmen under "politician" as well as a confirmation of my biggest problem with politicians reiterated in this following line, "a seeker or holder of public office, who is more concerned about winning favor or retaining power than about maintaining principles." Principles are the lacking feature in most public governance examples.

After this deluge of indecency toward our fellow citizens, I wondered if there wasn't something more positive and uplifting to be found in the connotation and deeper definition of the word "statesman" which I put on the same level as benevolent dictatorship. I had to go all the way back to ancient Greece and Plato to find my confirmation in a dialogue he wrote entitled *Statesman* or in the Latin *Politicus*.

To give you a little background, this dialogue was an attempt to discern the difference between a "statesman" and a "sophist" or philosopher. The word sophist is the root of the word sophisticated but it also has a negative application in it meant someone who was a teacher/philosopher capable of using rhetoric for "specious" or "captious" arguments. The most interesting portion of the article I found on Wikipedia is that, "according to John M. Cooper, the dialogue's intention was to clarify that to rule or have political power called for specialized knowledge. The statesman was one who possesses this *special knowledge of how to rule justly and well and to have the best interests of the citizens at heart*. It is presented that politics should be run by this knowledge, or gnosis. This claim runs counter to those who, the Stranger points out, actually did rule. Those that rule merely give the appearance of such knowledge, but in the end are really sophists or imitators. For, as the Stranger maintains, a sophist is one who does not know the right thing to do, but only appears to others as someone who does."

For those of you who don't see the value in knowledge of those long deceased, it is stimulating and rewarding to see the agreement of our current and recently departed critics of governance and the conclusion that little has changed over 3000 years in the human political condition. It is demonstrative of a solution to read the founding fathers' views on government as well, as many of them viewed it as a necessary evil.

I would go one step further than Plato's basic conclusion. Not only does it take empathy and a "special knowledge" of how to rule, it has more to do with Sowell's point that general knowledge is extremely important when defining a problem, crafting a solution, and verifying its impact. I see no one doing this in the current political arena. In fact, all are simply managing symptoms instead of attacking the disease.

Governance in the federal echelons finds economically illiterate individuals including the president. Obama is not the first but hopefully will be the last. Congress is full of these morons and incompetents who have been foisted upon us by the party machines of too similar parties attempting to retain power. It does no good to fight over who gets to steer a sinking ship. That is in essence what is occurring in America at this time.

Again being repetitive, it is most important that we elect individuals to public office on all levels who will change the deviance from what was originally intended. We all take an oath to uphold the Constitution as well as that of the State. Few of us think about that after once being elected.

I would suggest a new definition of statesman, at least one that I have not seen in print anywhere at this time. A statesman is a person involved in limited governance designed to give maximum freedom of economic and personal choice to those who elected that person. A statesman does not rule, he serves his electorate. A statesman does not take from one and give to another. Above all, a statesman enables his electorate to create, to personally and financially expand, and achieve a higher quality of life with minimal interference. The measure of the statesman's worth and achievement is in his electorate's success and not his own.

This applies in any city in California, anywhere in the country, or even the world. We are not supposed to be the pawns of the Illuminati or New World Order or whatever the controllers *du jour* have in mind for us all. In taking this back down to the local level, we must look at the philosophies of those currently in power and ask ourselves if we can do better. That is a very pertinent and important question.

Most people who get involved in politics do so for ego reasons or because they are non-productive members of society. Look at your own community and judge for yourselves if replacing those you elected based on their performance makes sense. Look at the potential candidates and ask them the specific questions "why do you want to do this job and how are you going to make it better for me?" If the answer comes back that "I will give you things you want using the State or Federal coffers", there is no point in changing what you have.

It is time for new leadership and a return to older, well thought out philosophies. America is not the productive entity it was coming out of the Industrial Revolution or even the mid 1900's and post war booms. It is my contention that the internet boom demonstrated not only the potential that still exists within our country but the demonic disastrous siphoning away of productive or even charitable capital by a socialist government and individuals who think they know better how to spend profits than the ones who created them.

Isn't it better to put leaders in place who see the big picture and know that it doesn't have to be this way? Communism, where the masses have little and the political elite have only a little more, is not the way to go. It truly is better to have everyone's boat rising. It is the individual's responsibility to make sure his or her boat doesn't have a hole in it.

It is rather astounding that we as humans are so adaptable and so accepting of whatever burden we are given. Rather than give you restrictions, anyone attempting to join your council this next November should want to give you the ability to succeed to whatever level is your desire. If you want to take that position or oppose those qualified as described who are running for the office, prove to me you can do the job equally as well ... or better ... and I would support your candidacy. Progressives and incumbents need not apply as you have proven your incompetence to move Cotati anywhere, let alone forward.

The alternative is what we have endured for the last 30 years in this town. Excuses for not getting projects done while shuffling revenues into higher salaries and benefits was never the way to go. How did this happen? The same way it always happens. You all sit at home and let those at city hall do what they want. How's that working for you?

I checked elections in the county during the last election. Two to one Democrat versus Republican. Yet when attending Cotati city council meetings, other than George Barich, Greg Karraker, and Kathryn Wickstrom, there is no conservative voice of reason. Rather than giving the current city council tacit approval, I would suggest loud vocal opposition as this council is going nowhere and is dragging you down with it.

It would seem most Cotatians prefer to only hear one side of every issue, the liberal progressive side. Stick out your hand as a city council to the State or Federal government and hope they deign to give you some taxpayer money for the traffic roundabouts to nowhere, or whatever other ill conceived project is on the table to make it appear they are actually awake rather than asleep at the wheel. When are you people, the electorate, going to wake up? You are really the ones sleeping while driving. Autopilot isn't getting the job done in Cotati.

You like being ruled despite your protestations to the contrary. We are on the verge of changing all of that. It starts first by recognizing the problem. It ends this November with addressing it ...

Cotati Follies

I don't make jokes; I just watch the government and report the facts. - Will Rogers

The Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition has suggested to city officials yet another way our community can reduce greenhouse gases, lowering noise levels, and combat obesity.



City Manager Thompson told the city council she is working with Prue Draper of The Cotati Historical Society on how the city will finance Cotati's 50th birthday celebration next year. A search for a federal grant of some kind appears to be underway and the most likely funding source at this time for Cotati. Draper made no suggestion the celebration be funded by private sources and put the squeeze on city officials at the June 13th council meeting to step with public funding.



The Cotati City Council is committed affordable housing and wants four-story live/work units throughout the down-



town corridor of Cotati. The only developer the city has attracted to date has submitted this plan he calls "Cotati with a View".

Andre Morrow says he is very active in the Cotati Chamber Commerce; yet he operates no business in Cotati and apparently does not reside in Cotati. So, his interest in advancing commerce in Cotati is based on what again? Do out-of-towners like Morrow concern people like Prue Draper who believe those who do not reside within city limits should not have any say in local affairs? Some people do get run out town, but not always the ones John or Lisa Moore had in mind.



Unidentified Object Goes Unfound; Gift Certificate Goes Unclaimed.

Last month in this space, we ran a photograph that is in plain view in a well-known Cotati business in a well-known location. We offered a \$25 Gift Certifi-



cate to the first person who could correctly tell this paper where it is.

The month before, we had a number of correct answers to our mystery tequila bottle, and awarded a \$25 Gift Certificate to Mi Ranchito, where it belonged.

So come on people, this contest is all about building Cotati business and building your interest in this town. That mystery object is still there, and just waiting to be found.

So we're upping the prize: A \$35 Gift Certificate to the Redwood Café to the first person who correctly identifies this little gem.

After months of trying to get to the bottom of this story, we have learned that Dennis Anderson of Rohnert Park says he will not be running for a seat on the Cotati City Council this year.



The fact that Anderson resides in Rohnert Park makes him ineligible. It also appears he has never been to a Cotati city council meeting in his life and may have had something to do with his decision to bow out. Facebook was used to launch what appears now to have been a publicity stunt where pressure was ultimately put on Anderson to finally come clean and explain himself. Anderson never posed a serious threat to the Democratic slate in Cotati, and this stunt simply added to Cotati's wacky political antics the town has become so famous for.

Anderson was also instrumental in bringing "White Trash Parties" to downtown Cotati in association with Friar Tucks Pub where people dress up to look like poor, uneducated, white people. This raised a lot of eyebrows in town and took political correctness to a new level. No word if the Cotati Chamber of Commerce has officially taken a position on their members conducting White Trash Parties at their places of businesses and their affect on tourism and economic development.

Phunky Phunn & Positive Thoughts



A big mistake that will cost Sonoma County millions

Did the Local movement think about Sonoma County as a destination for 7 million visitors each year or was this just one person's idea of how to decrease sales in our county and put money into their own pocket? Here's a novel idea, Stop using Shop Local, Buy Local, Go places that are Local and start using branding words like Shop Sonoma County, Shop Sebastopol, Shop Rohnert Park, Cotati, Santa Rosa, etc.

According to Dictionary.com the word 'Local' does not represent Sonoma County! It only represents a city or town. It could also represent one part of the body and ignore the rest. Is this really who we are as a community? Are we limited to only our town or our left arm of the body? I would suggest that we are a community of culture, art, diversity and great minds of people that stretch from San Francisco to Eureka. Bringing it more closely to home we are Sonoma County or Marin County.

So, you want to buy produce from a local farm or cabinets from a local cabinet maker, that's great! But to promote our town as small and insignificant by advertising and branding to the vast majority of visitors to our area, that's not so great. In fact, that's devastating. We Puare a tourist destination! Telling visitors to go back to their homes and shop their own "Local" community doesn't sound like the best direction. So let's look at some facts.

According to the Annual Tourism Report of 2008 & 2009 over \$1.34 BILLION in destination spending was from travelers coming to Sonoma County. The average visitor spends from \$250 to \$280 per day when they visit our community. What do you think a resident spends in Sonoma County each day? The population of Sonoma County is roughly 500,000 and the number of visitors to Sonoma County is over 7 million. It's quick math to see that visitors to our community make a huge difference in employment, cash flow, taxes, and the overall vital growth of our area.

Please take down your signs that promote Shop Local, Buy Local, and Go to places that are Local and replace them with Shop Bob's, Shop Santa Rosa, or Shop Sonoma County. Promote the health of our entire community and not just the health of our left arm.

Phunky Phunn

The views of this column do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher.

Cooking with Megan Cromwell

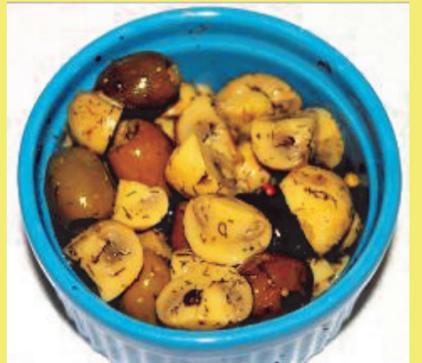


Easy Appetizers and Sides for Summer Get-Togethers

With summer here, picnics, parties, and barbecues are never in short supply, but ideas for what to serve with your grilled goodies can be lacking. Here are a few really easy sides and appetizers that are a nice change from the ordinary potato chips and macaroni salad.

All these recipes can be prepped the night before; for the potatoes, simply cut them up and store in a ziptop bag (with water) or bowl of water overnight, then drain and dry and proceed as outlined below.

1) Pickled/Marinated Mushrooms



8 ounces regular white mushrooms, cut in 1/2 if small, 1/3 or 1/4 if larger
1/2 cup warm water
1/2 cup white distilled vinegar
1 Tbs. sugar
2 Tbs. fine sea salt
Pickling spice: a handful of mixed peppercorns, 4 torn up bay leaves, 1 star anise pod, 1 Tbs garlic powder or 2-3 crushed cloves of garlic, dash of cayenne pepper, 1 Tbs dried dill or 4 Tbs fresh dill, 1 tsp. citric acid or 3 Tbs fresh lemon juice

Bring the water, vinegar, salt, sugar and pickling spice to a boil in a stainless steel or other non-reactive pan (my non-stick cookware worked just fine). Add the mushrooms and simmer for 5-10 minutes. Allow to cool, then store in the liquid in a covered bowl in the fridge for 8-12 hours before serving. You can double the recipe by removing the first batch of mushrooms with a slotted spoon, then boiling another 8 oz. in the liquid for another 5-10 minutes.

Serve chilled with an olive mix and feta cheese cubes for a yummy Mediterranean style anti-pasto.

2) Grilled Vegetable Salad

Toss sliced red and green bell peppers, asparagus spears, whole crimini mushrooms, red onion wedges, cauliflower florets, cherry tomatoes, and zucchini wedges in extra-light olive oil or grape-seed oil, sea salt, dried dill, and garlic powder, then cook on a grill pan or on a bbq-grill with a mesh grate til tender. Serve alone or with bowtie pasta, tossed with parmesan cheese and basil pesto. Great warm or cold.

3) Oven "Fried" Potatoes

Wash and dry 3-4 russet potatoes. Hand cut into fry-shapes or wedges. Toss with a healthy coating of olive oil, garlic powder, sea or kosher salt, and paprika. Spread evenly on parchment paper covered cookie sheets, and bake at 400° for 20-30 minutes, flipping the potatoes half-way through the cooking time. Great alternative to potato-chips for your burgers. Serve with blue cheese dressing, ranch dip, or spicy ketchup (Ketchup, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, and worchestershire sauce).

4) Spinach Dip in a Sourdough Bread Bowl

Mix 1 packet of Knorr dried vegetable soup mix with 1 cup each of mayonnaise and sour cream, and 16 oz. frozen chopped spinach defrosted and drained (squeeze it as dry as you can get it through a cheese-cloth or flour-sack towel). You can also add any or all of the following: 1 can chopped water-chestnuts, 8 oz. shredded asiago cheese, diced artichoke hearts (get the ones that are packed in water, and are just the base of the choke), 1 finely diced jalapeno (seeded and deveined).

Prepare a large sourdough round by slicing off a bit of the top, then carefully removing the inside, creating a bowl. Save the bread in a ziploc bag. Put the dip in the bread-bowl and cover with plastic wrap and allow the flavors to cure over-night. I guarantee this will be way better than any store bought dip.

Blog: <http://megarasmunchies.blogspot.com/>

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Letters to the Editor

Email: editor@thecotatiindependent.com

Dear Editor,

I appreciate you bringing light on to the need to vote NO on Measure D, but there is a piece of information about the measure that you didn't mention that I find to be not only extremely risky, but maddening as well.

The Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District wrote a **\$40,000** check out of the general fund to pay an outside company to conduct the "Yes on D" campaign. **\$40,000!** As if that kind of money wasn't enough to take out of the school's pocket, the total cost of the campaign was actually **\$90,000**, which means that each school in the district had to take money out of their PTA budgets to make up for the remaining \$50,000.

\$90,000 is a HUGE amount of money to take out of the schools to take a gamble on whether this company can get the measure to pass. And if it doesn't? The schools are that much broke.

What did \$90,000 get us? Some signs, and flyers sent in the mail. Volunteers have been hounded relentlessly to work the phone banks and walk door-to-door pushing the idea of Measure D. If this is all run by volunteers, what exactly did we pay for?

A pre-campaign study was also conducted before putting this measure on the ballot, asking voters whether they would support a measure that decreases class size, keeps libraries open, and supports new programs. Of course, that's not what Measure D is. It only "helps minimize class size increases" and "helps to preserve" already existing programs, leaving a lot of room for school administrators to spend our money however they like; such as renaming another school at a cost of \$30,000 to make kids feel "welcome" like they did with Creekside Middle School.

Yes, the schools are broke. So why gamble with what little money we have to push a measure that has no chance of passing?

Anonymous
Cotati

Editor,

I am against Prop D and against any new taxes, but not against education. In fact I believe that education is the only way to get our country out of the mire of ignorance into which it has

sunken. Results of our current public education system however do not vary. They stay abysmally low. The value of education is to suit individuals to fit into the world in which we live with uncensored knowledge in science, math, history geography philosophy art and literature. This is how education is presenter in Western European countries together with at least two languages. In most cases Latin and French or English. Language should be taught from first form or grade. It has been shown that learning more than one language increases brain function. Religions should only be taught as part of history, not as fact, for indoctrination in this area only leads to ignorance in many others.....

NO! I will not have my taxes raised to further what is called education and keep the ball rolling down hill to end up in the fundamental orifice of our planet wherein lay all the worst laid plans of mice and men. On Cotati's fire department. Since it became part of the larger district I have my doubts about it's efficiency. I would not recommend paying extra taxes for it. A fire bell went off in the building next to mine, so I called the fire department. The dispatcher asked me where the alarm was and I told her, "It's right behind you on East Sierra. Then she asked what city I was in. It turned out that the dispatcher was in Cloverdale, and the fire truck took 20 minuets to travel a quarter of a block. Give us back our old volunteer department.

Caveat Emptor

Tony Adler Arthur
Street Cotati 94931

Submit your letters
to the editor online
at

editor@thecotatiindependent.com

Fire Chief's Message

Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District,
Service to the community

By Frank Treanor, Chief of District



The District serves 25,000 people and covers 89 square miles. During the last few years, property tax revenue has gone down and caused the District to use dry period funding to make up the difference. This situation can only go on so long without increasing revenue or decreasing service. As a result, the Board of Directors has commissioned a study to research if putting a tax measure on the ballot is in the best interests of the public it serves. The study consists of phone calls to a representative sample of the tax-paying citizens and some participation by them in focus groups. The survey's focus is to determine the level of service desired by the taxpayers it serves. The survey costs \$15,000 and its results will be available soon.

The District has worked together to lower expenses and save money, lowering overhead by 25% in the past four years. Many of the staff wear other hats and do various jobs to save the District money and cut costs.

I would like to profile the members of our command staff and what they do for the District. Battalion Chief Steve Davidson started out with Penngrove VFD when he was 18 years old. He transitioned to Rancho Adobe Fire in 1993, when the District was established. Steve has taken classes that benefit the District and, through promotional exams, been promoted to Battalion Chief in December 1998. Steve is also our lead mechanic directing other skilled members like Captain Pete Albini, Captain Mike Weihman and Captain Tim Caldwell in keeping the fleet running without using expensive outside help. Steve wrote the specs for our water tender, which enabled us to purchase two for the price of one. Steve is also the District Fire Marshal and he is mentoring Captain Bill Adams to work in that position. Steve lives in Penngrove and can rapidly respond to an emergency, off duty if needed.

Battalion Chief Andy Taylor was hired in March of 1992. He studied and became an Engineer in 1992. He continued his education was promoted to Captain in 1997 and was promoted to Battalion Chief in January of 2001. Andy's interests are in human resource management, computer information technology, and grant writing. Andy has gotten almost \$400,000 dollars in grants for the District, to purchase turnout equipment, a thermal imaging camera, and our burn training trailer located at Station Two. As our computer specialist, he has set up an efficient computer network for the District at great savings. Andy lives in Rohnert Park, just outside the District's boundaries, and can respond quickly as well.

Battalion Chief Herb Wandel was hired in February of 1990, studied and was promoted to Engineer in 1992, then to Captain in 1998 and Battalion Chief in January of 2004. Herb has a passion for training and insuring the safety of all members. Herb coordinates live fire training in our burn trailer, not only for our members but for firefighters from other districts in the area. This promotes a safer workforce in our greater area. Herb often attends Tuesday night training in off duty status to teach and ensure the safety of all participants. Herb lives close by on the southwest edge of Bennett Valley. These fine gentlemen serve the District, not just because it is a job, but because it is a way of life.

We are including some **Summer Time Fire Safety Tips** that may keep your BBQ parties; parties and not disasters.

The outdoor and BBQ season is fast approaching; the Rancho Adobe Fire District would like to take this opportunity to remind you to please use caution when disposing of your BBQ ashes. Improperly disposed of ashes are responsible for starting several fires that we respond to every year.

While most people enjoy spending time with family and friends and firing up the

BBQ, whether you choose to use gas, charcoal or wood to cook your food. Please take into account the following.

Each year, the fire service responds to an estimated 6,500 grill fires.

These fires account for an estimated yearly 150 injuries and 5 fatalities.

These fires account for an estimated \$27.6 million in property loss. (Source: USFA Grill Fires)

Place your Charcoal BBQ on a flat non-combustive surface, your wooden deck or apartment balcony are not good choices. Please dispose of your ashes after they have cooled into a metal container and keep them away from anything that may burn. It may take several days for the ashes to completely cool. Adding water to the ashes once placed in the metal container will help extinguish any remaining coals as well as keep the dust down. Once you have made sure the coals are cold you can place them into your garbage can. If you use a propane BBQ please check to make sure that the propane bottle has been correctly attached to the hose and regulator and check for any leaks using a soapy solution. Make sure after you're done using the BBQ, you turn off the propane at the bottle to eliminate any chance of a leak.

Got Weeds?

Summer is fast approaching and it is time to start to mow your high weeds. An unmowed field will allow fire to travel faster and burn with more intensity than a field that has been properly mowed. Using a push type or residential riding mower on tall grass can lead to a fire starting, since the mower was not designed for heavy duty usage. You can help prevent a possible fire from starting by; make sure that your mower is in good repair, be sure to inspect the mower before you start to make sure any blades and belts are free of any built up grass, make sure the area you are mowing is free of any obstructions that could cause a spark or damage your mower, start out with the mower in its highest position and gradually move the blade down with each pass and to only mow on mornings where the fog has come in, don't mow during the heat of the day.

The Rancho Adobe Fire District maintains a list of businesses that will mow your property for a fee. This list can be found at www.rafd.org click the High Weed Mowing Contractors link. The list is maintained for your benefit and does not constitute a recommendation by the district.

If you have high weeds on an adjacent property and you feel they are a hazard, please feel free to contact us at 707-795-6011 and report the property. Please have the property's address or be able to give an address close to the property and be willing to provide your contact information. The property will be inspected and verified. The Rancho Adobe Fire District will attempt to contact the property owner and have the hazard taken care of.

Upcoming Events:

The Rancho Adobe Firefighters Association will be hosting their annual Pancake Breakfast on June 30th from 7am to 11am at the Penngrove Station. Activities include an auto extrication demonstration, household fire sprinkler demonstration, Thermal Camera hands-on as well as static equipment displays.

This is a fun event with some great demonstrations and food; the money raised supports the District by purchasing needed tools and equipment that we would otherwise go without.

On October 12, in conjunction with Fire Prevention Week the Rancho Adobe Firefighters Association will be hosting their free pasta dinner at the Cotati Fire Station. Come down and enjoy a fire station cooked pasta dinner. Static equipment displays will be available.

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to your smartphone or access through Call Back Service

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on your mobile phone bill

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For more
information
call
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The Good, the Bad, and the Inedible

Candid reviews of Wine Country restaurants, bars, cafes, food vendors, and farmers markets.

by Kathryn Wickstrom - Cotati
Foodie, gardener, wine lover, and consumer of all things edible in Wine Country.

Visit my new blog: www.goodbadinedible.com



Legend: ***** Perfection
**** Great
*** Good
** Needs Improvement
* Not Worth Going

Prices: \$\$\$\$ Expensive (over \$30 pp)
\$\$\$ Mid-Range (\$18 - \$30 pp)
\$\$ Average (\$8 - \$18 pp)
\$ Bargain (under \$8 pp)
(Excludes beverage, tax, and tip)

Graffiti

101 - 2nd Street / Petaluma / 765-4567

Category: Tapas, California Grill

Daily: L - D

Mon - Thu 11:30am - 12am

Fri - Sat 11:30am - 1:00am

Sun 11am - 10pm

Specialty: Small Plates

Full Bar / Outdoor Patio / Kid & Dog Friendly / Street Parking

**1/2 \$\$\$-\$\$\$



In the Basin Street Landing development, adjacent to Boulevard Cinemas and the Great Petaluma Mill in the downtown Petaluma "Theater District" and alongside the Petaluma River, Graffiti offers a large, horseshoe-shaped bar with lounge area for cocktails or just sipping, a main dining room that is cozy-sized and expansive outdoor patio areas looking out on the river.

Great looking place. An ultra-modern space, yet still warm and inviting, thanks to the rich woods and flattering lighting in the evenings. I like to see what I'm ordering as well as eating, but I don't like harsh, bright lights.

What about the food? Well, we have been visiting this restaurant for several years since it opened in 2005, and I have to say it's kinda hit and miss. Our last visit was for lunch and it was a hit. Dinners have been a miss for the most part. But that does not stop us from frequently popping in to the bar/lounge for drinks and small plates in the evening. Actually, I think it's the better alternative, as dining room service can be slow.

On our recent lunchtime visit, we chose a patio table across from a local street band performing. On this glorious day of sunshine with the temperature just south of 70 degrees, a lot of folks had the same idea and the place was almost full. We ordered a *Warm Spinach Salad* (\$8**** small; \$13 large) tossed with smoked bacon, wild mushrooms, caramelized cipollini onions, feta, toasted almonds and red grapes; *Roasted Lamb Flatbread Pizzetta* (\$15****) pears, Gorgonzola & Asiago cheeses, caramelized onions, candied walnuts and port balsamic reduction.

The spinach salad was very good. I especially liked the addition of the red grapes. The small size is fine if you are not very hungry. Perfect "girl's" portion! The flatbread was also very tasty. A nice pairing of sweet pears, candied walnuts and port reduction went well with the lamb.

I suggest this place for lunch on the patio, weather permitting or, drinks and small or large plates in the bar/lounge anytime.

Wine Notes: Extensive list of offerings from Sonoma and Napa valleys with many selections by the glass or half-bottle.

Bistro Don Giovanni

4110 Howard Lane / Napa / 707-224-3300

Category: Northern Italian

Daily: Sun - Thu 11:30am - 10pm

Fri - Sat 11:30am - 11pm

Specialty: Thin Crust Pizza

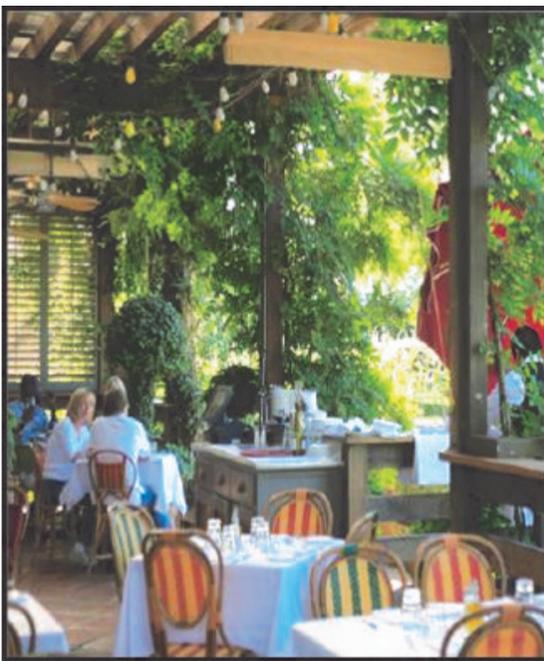
Indoor and Outdoor Seating

Full Bar / Child Friendly / Parking Lot

**** \$\$\$-\$\$\$

Right off Hwy. 29 and conveniently located to many of Napa Valley's premier wineries, this restaurant is reminiscent of lazy warm days spent in Tuscany lingering over the table, sipping wine. Even more so because Bistro Don Giovanni offers "Al Fresco" dining underneath a latticed portico or next to their lyrical

"Commedia Dell'Arte" fountain across from their herb and veggie gardens, separated by a massive hedge of rosemary.



If fresh air is not your thing, or if the weather is unfavorable, you can always step through the French doors to the main dining room with small bar that opens up into a lovely room with booths and tables. This is a very attractive restaurant; inside and out.

I have had lunch here several times and always thought it was an attractive restaurant with good food. On this recent visit I was entertaining a client who has a summer home in Napa and rates Don Giovanni has her favorite Wine Country restaurant. So I decided to plunge into the menu and explore dishes with gusto. Given our festive mood, I ordered a bottle of Rombauer Chardonnay, one of my favorite wines. Sipping our wine and nibbling on the complimentary house-made focaccia with rosemary, my client recommended the *Bruschetta* (\$8 ****) Nicely toasted slices of French bread topped with tomatoes, garlic and basil.

Antipasti: *Beet and Haricots Verts Salad* (\$11 *****) avocado-fennel salad with Roquefort Vinaigrette. I am always up for roasted beets. This one was beautiful to look at and dressed just right. Then it was time to check out their pizzas!

Margherita, (\$14 ****) tomato, basil, Mozzarella. Such a simple pizza that can go so wrong and does, if not prepared properly. No worries here. Simply wonderful with a thin crust and just enough tomato and cheese. Needless to say, I took half home to hubby!

Secondi: *Seared Salmon Filet* (\$26****) with butter-milk mashed potatoes, tomato-chive butter and, the day's special, *Halibut with Artichokes, Mashed Potatoes and Bagna Cauda Sauce* (\$26****). Both dishes



were cooked perfectly. The salmon had a pink center and the halibut was flaky and moist with crispy skin. The artichokes came from the restaurant's ample garden and were delicious with a bit of their stems left on. For those unfamiliar with the Italian sauce, Bagna Cauda, it is made from combining olive oil, chopped anchovies, garlic and lots and lots of butter cooked over semi high heat and used as a dip or poured over meat or fish. It is Italy's answer to Japan's Umami. A great flavor addition.

Dolci was a *Blueberry Gelato* (\$6****) refreshing with real fruit and a cookie. A perfect ending. I highly recommend this restaurant. Staff is warm and friendly.

Wine Notes: All the usual suspects, with two estate grown wines from the owners' one-acre vineyard at their family home in Napa Valley: a Cabernet Sauvignon and Scalavesse, (an aged and balanced Sangiovese).

Blu Restaurant

140 - 2nd Street / Petaluma / 707-778-6965

Category: Diner Food Baby!

Tue-Thu 11am - 9pm L-D

Fri - Sun 7:30am - 9pm B-L-D

Closed on Mon

Specialty: Burgers, Sandos and Salads

Tuesday Special Pricing: All burgers are \$9, all day

Kid friendly / Street Parking

Beer & Wine

*** 1/2 \$-\$\$

Open for five years, this corner restaurant, across the street from the Boulevard Theatre in the work/live space along the Petaluma River, is a diner par excellence! How I avoided this place for the past five years is a mystery to me! I love good diner food and this place rocks it.

Not your typical diner with all the nostalgic cliché trappings reminiscent of "Happy Days" and the gang, it is more a nod to hip, and modern; HVAC open ceilings and ultra clean space with just enough tables and booths without feeling overcrowded. Oh, there is a short counter up at the front with a few stools if you prefer but, I like the nice booths with lots of space to spread out.

On my first visit, hubby was with me and ordered a *Reuben Sando* (\$11 *****) corned beef, sauerkraut, 1000 Island Dressing & Swiss cheese on rye bread. Piled just high enough, this was a killer rendition. Moist meat and just enough dressing. For me, *World's Greatest Cobb* (\$12 *****) chicken, bacon, cheddar, crumbled bleu cheese, hard-cooked egg, avocado & tomatoes in a honey vinaigrette over iceberg lettuce. Indeed. Who am I to dispute this lofty claim? All I can tell you, it is very good and very large. A share dish, easily.



On my second visit, I spoke with the owner, a very nice young man with a family history spanning 50 years in Bay Area eateries. Just to mention one, his sister owns Sugo just up the street from Blu. Another restaurant on my short list to try. Now I'll probably put it at the very top, after eating at Blu!

On my second visit, I was alone and decided to sit at a 2-table by the big picture window to watch the street action. The waitress was friendly and said "I'll be right with you." I don't know about you but that goes a long, long way with me. We were off to a good start.

A special board hung over the short counter area and I spotted *Clam Chowder* (\$6 bowl / \$4 cup ***) Was it housemade? Why, yes! A steaming bowl was placed in front of me with saltine crackers. I prefer oyster but, not a biggie. This chowder was good. White wine and thyme permeated the soup along with lots and lots of clams. Yummy!

Next, *Fried Calamari* (\$9**) extra-large portion covered in a tomato salsa. Though the color was good, indicating the oil was fresh, the fish had been overcooked and the result was a bit chewy. I liked the salsa, it had good flavor but I personally think there was too much used. Half the amount would have worked well.

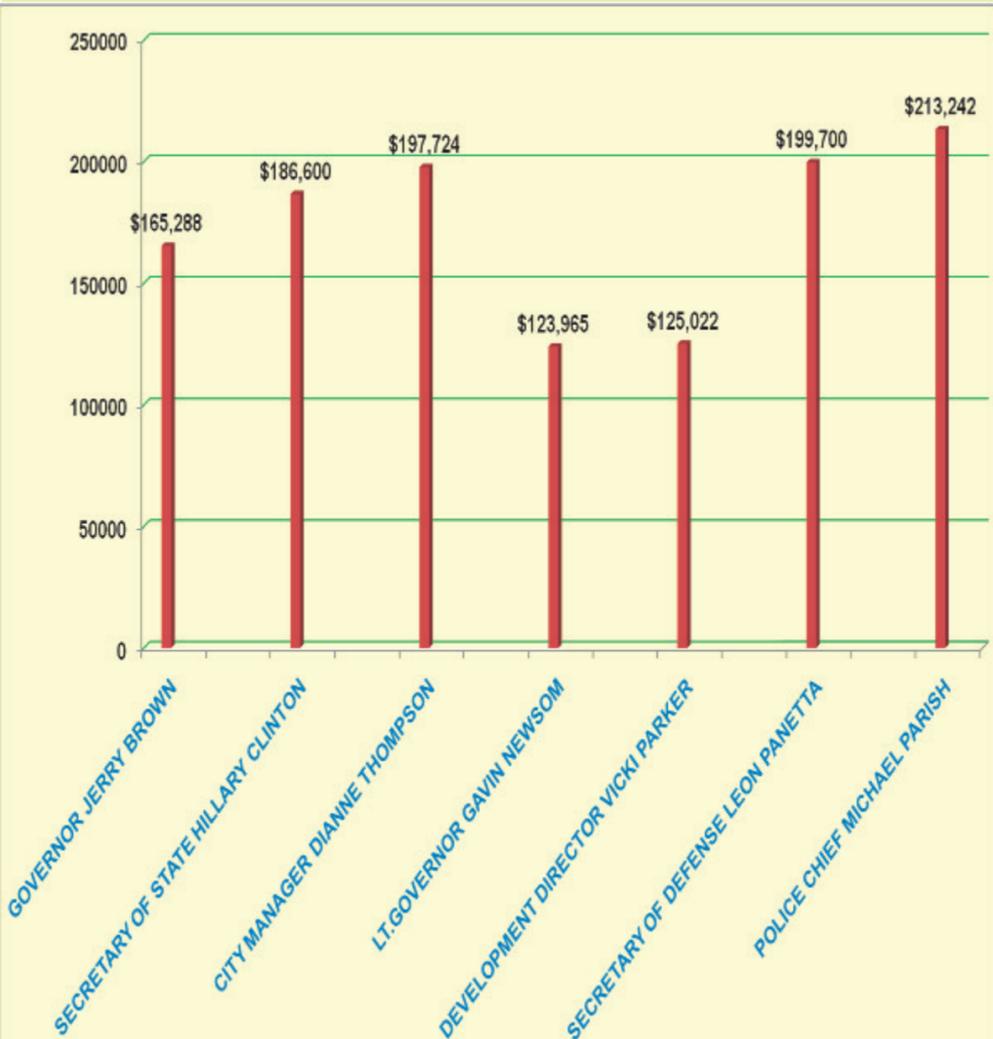
On to the burger. I chose their signature, *Blu* (\$11 *****) caramelized red onion with crumbled bleu cheese. OMG. This was a killer burger and the sesame bun was wonderful. Lightly toasted, this bun compressed itself around the meat, but did not get overly soft or soggy like so many do. A definite plus. It made the burger all the more tasty.

With eight (8) meat burgers to pick from and one veggie and one mushroom burger too, this place will Oh, I forgot to mention the hand-cut french fries. Nicely cut sticks of potato with bits of their skin left on, these beauties were fried up nice and crisp and properly salted after they came out of the oil. Delicious. Even though I only ate half of my burger (took rest home of course) I consumed all those tasty fries.

BTW, if you're into milkshakes they've got 'em, along with root beer floats, juices and fresh squeezed OJ. I'm definitely going back for breakfast on the weekend for *Lemon Ricotta Pancakes* or *Texas Toast* (\$9). *Get Thee to Blu Restaurant* for some diner food with soul.

Until next time, bon appétit!

Cotati City Officials Make HOW MUCH???



(Cotati, CA) According to the latest available figures, median household income in Cotati is \$65,122. For Sonoma County in June, 2012, unemployment stood at 8.6 per cent. But according to a recent speech by Barack Obama, "The private sector is doing just fine." Perhaps the pressures of all his golfing and fundraising trips have made him slightly confused. What he probably meant to say is "The public sector in Cotati is doing fine." Just look at the chart to your left.

To be fair, the figures cited for the three Cotati officials at the left include their total salary and benefits, which were taken directly

from the city's website. This paper also added the \$9,092 yearly for Ms. Thompson's planet-friendly Prius.

The figures for Gov. Brown and Lt. Gov. Newsom may or not include their benefits, and the figures for Ms. Clinton and Mr. Panetta almost certainly do not.

On the other hand, California's top two executives are responsible for over 37 million people, and the two Cabinet secretaries are responsible for 309 million Americans. Contrast that with Cotati city staff, who are responsible for approximately 7,000 citizens.

Yep, the public sector is doing fine. How are you doing?

Cotati/Penngrove Facebook Group Supports Local Business; No City Leaders or Staff Bother to Join

Story and opinion by Greg Karraker



(Cotati, CA) Several months ago, I became aware of a Facebook group whose purpose is to support local Cotati businesses. It's called the Cotati/ Penngrove Cash Mob, and as of this writing, it has 82 members, including myself, Former Cotati City Councilman George Barich, Brett Sandquist of the 8-Ball, and many other citizens who would like to see Cotati business grow and prosper. The Facebook group is a great idea, and I think you should join.

If you'd like to join, you can find the group with a simple search on Facebook, or type in <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CotatiPenngroveCashMob/>

What will you see? This is a description of the group, taken from their home page;

NEW GROUP!!!! Mission = To support Cotati and Penngrove businesses, bars, restaurants, service providers, artists, and local made goods with our business by shopping local. This is open to anyone who is interested in the mission. By attending scheduled events at the locations, we will be 'mobbing' them with our business to spend as little as \$10 to \$20 cash to help keep them in business and spreading awareness.

As the group grows, special promotions may be available. We will also support our sister city "mobs" when possible. Tell your friends to join our group!

We are not paid, funded, or affiliated with any business or political group. We are just people willing to step up and support our favorites and maybe find a few new favorites in the process. Oh...and have fun too.

No city council members or city staff have joined

Despite all their talk about promoting business in Cotati, City Manager Dianne Thompson, Community Development Director Vicki Parker, Mayor Susan Harvey, Vice Mayor Pat Gilardi, and council members John Dell 'Osso, Mark Landman, and Janet Orchard do not belong to this group. In fact, they are hardly seen patronizing any of Cotati's businesses. The only Cash Mob member I could find who is remotely connected to the city is Cotati Chamber of Commerce Director Suzanne Whipple. She should be proud to be a member.

The rest of Cotati's political establishment should be embarrassed.

Vote to Outlaw One-Lane Roundabouts Set for November Election Fight, Unless City Council Comes to Their Senses

(Cotati, CA) On Monday, April 30, Patty Minnis, leader of the NO ROUNDABOUTS movement, filed a ballot initiative signed by 659 Cotati citizens that would force the city to either abandon this widely hated plan, or to let the voters decide the fate of the roundabouts in November. Only 388 signatures are required to put this initiative to a vote, and the city had 30 days to verify the authenticity of the signatures.

After taking 43 calendar days, the City finally notified former council member Minnis that 579 signatures had been verified, one less than needed to force a special election, and 191 more than needed to put the initiative on the ballot for November.

So the next step is up to the city council. They can admit that nobody wants this traffic-choking one-lane nightmare, and agree to drop the idea once and for all.

Or the mayor and council can continue to insist that the roundabout mess, aka The Village Main Street Plan, is what Cotati really needs. If they do, it will be put to a vote in November, where roundabouts are certain to lose by a landslide. Any council member who is tone-deaf

enough to ignore the clearly stated will of the voters will also have a deservedly hard time in the November election.

Based on recent rumors that the city is fast-tracking the installation of new natural gas lines on Old Redwood Highway, they may be trying to push ahead no matter what you think.

But no matter how hard the city council tries to sell this deeply flawed plan, they will not convince 7,000 people to build something that only a few people want.

Seeing decisions in this town made by the will of the people, and not by the whim of the City Manager, is a refreshing sight. Hopefully, we'll see even more of this in the future.

Greg Karraker is frequently amused and outraged by the acts of small people in small governments.

His blog can be found and commented on at www.thelittlepicture.net

City Hall Refuses to Return Tax Money to Overcharged Victims

(From Page One)

I then asked Mayor Harvey if she thought this sort of behavior was welcome in the city she governs, and asked her to condemn it publicly. Finally, I made it clear that if she did not condemn this behavior, the citizens would conclude that it met her approval.

At the end of Citizen's Business, the council and staff typically respond to some of the questions raised by citizens, dispute some of the statements that citizens make, and totally ignore others.

Predictably, City Attorney Rudnansky refused to answer my simple question. So this paper will file a formal Public Records Request to force the city to answer, and will file a complaint with District Attorney Jill Ravitch.

Perhaps the most disappointing response was from Mayor Harvey. Instead of acting like a leader who is concerned about the way Cotati treats its citizens, she did not say a word. This suggests two possibilities:

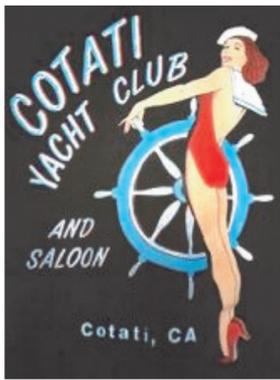
1. She thinks this cold, arrogant behavior is just fine.
2. She is too intimidated by the dominating, controlling personalities of City Manager Dianne Thompson, Vice Mayor Pat Gilardi, and council member Janet Orchard to ever step away from the party line and take a firm, principled, independent stand on anything.

I have observed Mayor Harvey in many meetings, and have no doubt that she is a decent human being with good instincts.

So I believe that she is terrified to stand up for what she believes at the risk of offending the political hacks who surround her. But if she wants the job of Mayor, that's no excuse.

I also believe it is the responsibility of every citizen who lives here to speak up. If you want to live in a city where the City Manager earns \$183,702 a year, plus the lease of a new Prius, and treats the people who pay her bloated salary like dirt, fine. But if you think you, your family, and your neighbors deserve better, remember this. According to the City Charter, the City Manager reports to the City Council, and the City Council reports to you, the voters. So I suggest you contact Mayor Harvey and strongly encourage her to do the job she was elected to do. *Her number is (707) 792-4600. Her email is sharvey@ci.cotati.ca.us*

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City of Santa Rosa Served with Notice by Opponents of ICLEI

(From Page One)

The notice delivered on June 6, 2012

"The People, to encompass several citizen groups, hereby issue and are filing a demand that the City of Santa Rosa immediately sever all connections with, and withdraw from, the United Nations sponsored NGO known as International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Local Governments for Sustainability.

A) WHEREAS this unconstitutional alliance is in violation of our Constitution of the United States of America states; Article 1, Section 10. "No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, of Confederation..."

As a political subdivision of the State, you are bound by the same prohibition.

B) WHEREAS sworn Public Officials are in violation of their Oath.

C) WHEREAS law known as Misprision of Treason places legal burden on officials to report a treasonous act to appropriate authority when observing or having knowledge of same.

Failure to act is misprision of treason.

California Penal Code 38 is clear: "Misprision of Treason is the knowledge and concealment of treason, without otherwise assenting to or participating in the crime. It is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison".

Consider this legal notice of treasonous activities implemented through our local government, of which you are more than complicit.

Citizens are on record as disclosing and bringing to Council's attention this treasonous 'Alliance'.

Furthermore, citizens are on record as having requested that Council, Mayor, City Mgr. schedule this subject as an item on the Council's Agenda.

Furthermore, citizens are on record as repeatedly reiterating the nature of this transgression.

Furthermore, e-mail correspondence pursuant to this important matter has been largely ignored.

Furthermore, citizens have repeatedly, vocally associated the degradation of: Property Rights, small business climate, fiscal health, and much more with our ICLEI membership.

You have accepted, by Oath of Office, the responsibility of protecting the Rights of local citizens.

Instead, you have engaged in a globalist Agenda designed to abolish the political recognition of your constituents natural rights including the right to use and enjoy private property.

This citizen initiative should serve as a Charter amendment, a demand and notice of legal transgression.

This demand should legally prohibit, effect an amendment to our City Charter, put City Officials on notice as to our illegal adherence to any 'Sustainable' policy effecting any taxation, the adoption of any regulation, policy, or ICLEI directive pursuant to same. Including all policy directed at 'green house gas' emissions.

We hereby demand a Charter Amendment requiring an immediate disassociation and withdrawal from the NGO known as ICLEI whose stated purpose is the implementation of UN Agenda 21 on a local governmental level as stated in the NGO's own material.

WHEREAS it's ideology and policies are fundamentally opposed to the principals basic to our Constitution being the governing documents that public officials are sworn to uphold.

The People fail to see the public benefit to this treasonous alliance.

Furthermore the People (and our Constitution) do not recognize the authority to undermine and subvert the communities Property Rights, Natural Unalienable Rights, the authority to implement over reaching regulatory policy that undermines our small business, our fiscal/economic landscape, adversely effecting the efficiency and expense of public utilities, services including water and the community's rights to same.

The incremental restriction to, and redundant taxation of parks and open space the People have already paid for the right to access and enjoy.

WHEREAS 'Sustainable Development' seeks to incrementally undermine our Freedoms, Liberties, our geographic choice in terms of where and how we live.

Seeking to socially engineer through regulation, taxation, zoning, General Plan amendments, ICLEI provided models, templates, software a concerted effort to coerce citizens into Smart Growth without the general public's knowledge, vote and/or consent.

Incrementally imposing policy directed at undermining single family home ownership through over reaching regulation and various taxation, over reaching code enforcement, arcane zoning and public utility manipulation, directed at moving citizens into Smart Growth Transit Villages adjacent to rail where individuals can be more easily controlled by a governmental model that seeks to have human activity granted by and reconciled through the State.

Shamefully you have been complicit in life changing policy directed by ICLEI that seeks to erode your constituents Freedoms, financial abundance and the sovereignty of our community.

WHEREAS 'Regionalism' (ABAG), facilitated consensus, a lack of transparency, an empowerment of unelected councils, boards, neighborhood groups and 'Public-Private Partnerships' employ a soviet model of governance unauthorized in our Constitutional Republic.

WHEREAS this alliance undermines/subverts the central dynamic of our governmental model by incentivizing our public officials outside the People's accepted mechanisms, which greatly compromises the very sworn purpose of your trusted position.

WHEREAS the guise of this unconstitutional Agenda is entirely flawed as it based in contrived pseudo science, operating under the postulate that carbon dioxide is a detriment to the environment.

Carbon dioxide is a naturally occurring byproduct of life and a necessary component of our atmosphere required for healthy plant life. This naturally occurring molecule having always been present to greater extent during the Mesozoic prehistoric era when vegetation and all forms of life were extremely abundant.

There is substantial worldwide scientific evidence that variance in temperature correlates with solar cycles as it always has, and is not associated with carbon dioxide levels or atmospheric concentrations.

During such cycles other planets in our solar system warmed and cooled in sync with these natural variations proving that man's activities were not of consequence.

Temperatures during the medieval period (1100-1300) were higher than now despite being prior to the Industrial Revolution. Geophysical Research Letters published a report in 2005 showing that arctic temperatures closely correlated to solar activity, not carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. In addition there are multiple sources of corroborating evidence demonstrating approximately 1500 year cycles (plus or minus 500 yrs.) going back 400,000 years. The warmer periods being productive agriculturally. Many predictions of the man made global warming hypothesis have been contradicted by empirical evidence. Including:

- 1) Lack of additional water vapor being trapped in the upper atmosphere.
- 2) Surface temperatures increasing at a faster rate than those in the upper atmosphere, a trend that should be reversed as predicted by the greenhouse gas hypothesis.
- 3) Warming is not the strongest at the polar regions of the Earth as predicted by green house gas models.
- 4) Carbon dioxide has shown to be lagging, not leading, indicator of global warming throughout the history of the Earth (most likely due to changes in solubility in oceans as temperatures rise), and
- 5) Temperatures declined from 1940-1975 despite huge increases in man made carbon dioxide emissions during this period.

Anthropogenic 'Global Warming' is the biggest lie of the 21st Century.

Contrived as an instrument of human oppression, which is exactly what UN Agenda 21 Sustainable Development is.

ICLEI being the local implementation arm as outlined in United Nations own training material.

WHEREAS the tyrannical notion that taxpayers should forfeit their Civil Rights and be financially damaged

based on an ill-conceived postulate that being carbon dioxide is harmful to the environment does not pass the People's approval. Furthermore having our economy and tax base damaged based on the inventory of a naturally occurring gas is unacceptable. As is the mandatory implementation of alternative, more costly energy sources should no longer be justified based on junk science.

This violates the fiduciary responsibility City Officials owe the tax payer.

WHEREAS United Nations Agenda 21 Sustainable Development is a comprehensive Plan that includes extreme environmentalism, social engineering and manipulation as to effect political and economic control as set forth at the United Nations Conference on Environmental and Development (UNCED), known as The Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil June 3rd through 14th 1992.

WHEREAS United Nations Agenda 21 has been and continues to be covertly and insidiously pushed into local communities throughout the United States of America implemented by International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), since 2003 also known as Local Governments for Sustainability.

Implementing local 'Sustainable Development' policies including, but not limited to 'Smart Growth', 'Wild lands Projects', 'Resilient Cities', 'Climate Action Plans', 'Regional Visioning Projects', etc. and

WHEREAS this United Nations Agenda 21 plan or radical so-called 'Sustainable Development' views the American way of life that includes private property ownership, single family homes, private automobile ownership, individual free travel choices, and privately owned farms as destructive to the environment and

WHEREAS according to United Nations Agenda 21 policy, 'social justice'/social equity' is described as the 'collective' right and opportunity of all people to benefit equally from the resources and labor afforded us by society and the environment which should be achieved by an orchestrated redistribution of wealth, and

WHEREAS United Nations Agenda 21 policy promotes forfeiting our National Sovereignty as it is deemed a 'social injustice'.

WHEREAS carbon dioxide is a natural gas exhaled by all animals, is harmless in normal concentrations, any infringements on it's production are infringements on citizen's Rights in the name of same as a violation of natural rights provided under the Ninth Amendment of the United States Constitution. Therefore any state or federal regulations (AB 32, SB 375) we hereby demand be considered null and void and of no legal jurisdiction in the City of Santa Rosa California.

Santa Rosa City Charter:

WHEREAS the People demand an immediate City Charter amendment purging our General Plan of all ICLEI directive, preventing implementation of any 'Sustainable' policy or taxation rooted in flawed need for 'green house gas' prevention, modification, inventory, et al.

WHEREAS Santa Rosa City Charter, Section 3, Powers of the City: "The City, by and through it's Council and other officials, shall have and may exercise all powers necessary or appropriate to a municipal corporation and the general welfare of it's inhabitants which are not prohibited by the Constitution"...and

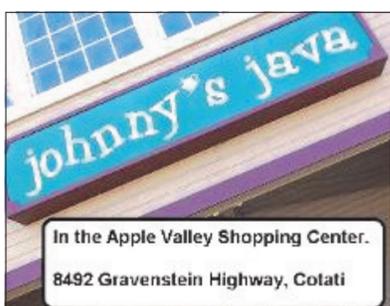
WHEREAS Santa Rosa City Charter, Section 17, "every officer shall take and subscribe to the Constitutional Oath of office before entering upon the performance of his or her official duties".

WHEREAS City Charter 'i': "provides that the City Manager's entire time be devoted to the interests of the City"

WHEREAS local government is only authorized to operate under our Constitution, not the charter of a U.N. accredited NGO (ICLEI).

WHEREAS this treaty UN Agenda 21 operates under the 'Precautionary Principal', a postulate that, in the absence of scientific proof, deference is to be given to extreme environmental ideology. subverting individual rights in a manner that is also fundamentally opposed to our founding principals (guilty until proven innocent?).

The people are motivated, inclined, Constitutionally prepared to generate a petition initiative pursuant to this demand notice."





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Visitor Center and Café appears to have an uncertain future

(From Page One)



I have driven by this location a few times a week during regular business hours only to find the place locked up and not a soul in sight. There are tables, chairs, desks and displays, but no live bodies and no customers. What I can see through the windows are lots of brochures advertising wineries outside of Cotati. When we spoke last, the owner had made mention that he was being financially backed by the Sonoma County Vintners, but no other details were given. He only mentioned that because of the city going back on its word and giving him the run-around. The future of the enterprise was in serious question even in May, 2012.

The owner described that he had hoped the courtyard would be a comfortable space for live music, poetry readings, etc. but with the roar of hundreds of thousands of vehicles traveling up and down the freeway, that seemed unimaginable even with a concrete wall which would only amplify the road noise.

The businesses in this strip mall need all the help they can get as vacancies have plagued the property for some time. On the corner where a successful gas station once stood, now lies a barren piece of dirt because the owner, Bert Lathrop, says he is simply fed up with Cotati City Hall placing unrealistic conditions on him and has had the property up for sale for years. The property across the street was the proposed site for a brand new Oliver's Market to replace the old one in Cotati. Apparently, that project is as cold as ice at the moment due to the city demanding more than the developers had originally bargained for.

There is a serious need to have a privately funded visitor center and café in Cotati to help the dismal economic outlook of the city which is currently searching for federal grants to spur more economic development. But if a visitor center's sole purpose is to offer a few refreshments and quickly get you back into your car and heading north to spend your money at real wineries and real tourist destinations, it will do little to bring any needed sales tax dollars to Cotati.

The Cotati City Council members have failed to make any public comments about the visual blight on this property

even though they must drive past it often, one would assume. Hard for city officials to claim ignorance in this case. The city manager has failed to mention the ongoing problem with the property in any of her city manager reports to the city council at its regular meetings. Her reports tend to run less than one minute when there is so much to report on in this city that affects the health and well being of the community.

The owner of the Visitor Center and Café did mention at one time he had worked closely with the Cotati Chamber of Commerce but now feels that the organization is not worth his effort and he is proceeding without their help or guidance. When I asked why, he said there was simply too much infighting and the members seem to be only looking out for their own business interests and little more.

Apparently, The City of Cotati is celebrating its 50th birthday in 2013 and the Chamber of Commerce has no plans in the works, according to Prue Draper. Councilman John Del'Osso stated publicly recently that three years of planning is recommended for such an event like this, and expressed his concern that planning such an event at this late date, without any public funds allocated in the city budget for such a public celebration, is ambitious and quite a challenge. The city manager replied by stating she is working closely with Prue Draper, but who knows in what capacity. Details were not given.

The blighted properties in Cotati stand as a testament to the failed Redevelopment Agency that wasted millions of state tax dollars for many years as Cotati now attempts to pick up the pieces of a mish-mash of projects in town after the Supreme Court in California ruled Cotati has to give the state its RDA money back.

It is our hope the Visitor Center and Café and the city can work out their differences, open for business, and do something about its wall of shame and clean up this property before the Cotati Accordion Festival in August. From the look of things over the last two months, it's an old fashioned standoff and neither party is moving due to a lack of funds or lack of will on both sides.

Just a Pinch



Sharing Hometown Recipes, Cooking Tips and Coupons

By Janet Tharpe

Bacon and Scallops Jazz Up Creamy Pasta Dish



"I had a lot of fun brainstorming ideas for this one!"

Cindy Sandberg
Carlisle, IN
pop. 1,764



Why not surprise your sweetie this Valentine's Day with a special breakfast in bed? Home cook Brad Heintz gets rave reviews from his wife any time he prepares this creative concoction. His Mango Salsa Omelet puts a twist on a breakfast favorite - the sweet and spicy mango salsa complements the sauteed veggies and savory egg perfectly! The recipe has become a favorite of their family - and mine!

See step-by-step photos of Cindy's recipe and thousands more from other home cooks at:

www.justapinch.com/baconpasta

You'll also find a meal planner and coupons for the recipe ingredients. Enjoy and remember, use "just a pinch"...

- Janet

Creamy Bacon Pasta with Coffee Spice Rubbed Scallops

What You Need

- 4 eggs
- 1/2 c diced ham
- 1/2 c shredded four cheese
- Mexican cheese
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 large mangoes, diced
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 2 tbsp sweet onions, diced
- 1/2 jalapeno pepper, minced
- 2 tbsp cilantro, chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh lime juice
- 1/2 tsp taco seasoning mix

Directions

- Prepare mango salsa by dicing mangoes, tomatoes and onions. Mince jalapeno and chop cilantro. Place in a bowl.
- Pour in lime juice and add taco seasoning. Stir until all

ingredients are mixed together and coated. (Mango salsa can be made up to a day ahead.)

- Scramble eggs and dice ham. Heat omelet skillet with butter. When skillet is hot, add enough egg to cover bottom of skillet. When the egg mixture is almost firm yet still somewhat runny, flip omelet over. (This will make the omelet fluffy.)
- Load one side of egg mixture with diced ham and shredded cheese. Fold egg over. Let heat through and then place on plate.
- Cover omelet with mango salsa. Sprinkle with extra shredded cheese. Salt and pepper to taste, and enjoy!

Submitted by: Cindy Sandberg, Carlisle, IN (pop. 1,764)

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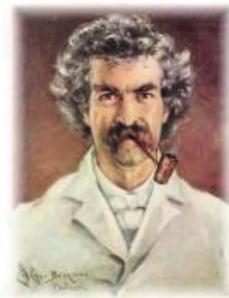
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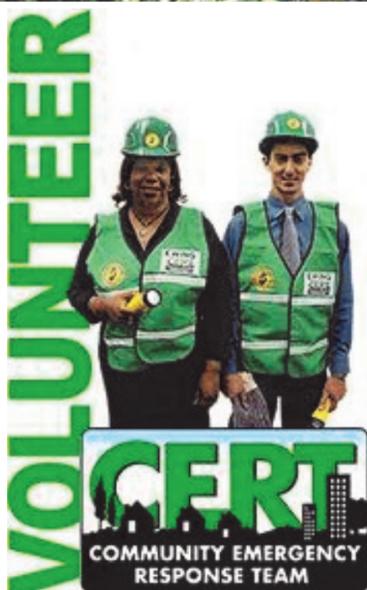


It's easier to fool people than to convince them that they have been fooled.

-Mark Twain



Do you remember Cotati Jan. 2008?



Cotati is Next on Bennett's List

(From Page One)

In a formal notice, Bennett spelled out the details of the Santa Rosa city council's ongoing illegal conduct on June 5th 2012, and presented his complaint to the city council for immediate action. The notice outlined that the city, without legal right or authority, adopted a policy to embrace United Nations Agenda 21, ICLEI in violation of federal law.

The facts are as follows: Jim took it upon himself, after much deliberation and consulting with local citizen groups, to put the Santa Rosa city council, its mayor and city manager on notice for Misprison of Treason at the Tuesday June 5th regular council meeting. The city was also served with Writ of Quo Warranto. Both documents, which were date-stamped by the city clerk, challenged the city's authority to enter into an "alliance" with an international group outside the United States Government.

Bennett says, "For years now we have tried to explain, submit information and examples as to what the city's membership in ICLEI actually represents in terms of our community's fiscal health, their constituents' civil rights, their oath of office, and our Constitution. Article 1, Section 10 forbids an entity such as a municipality or county government to engage in contracts or other agreements with this United Nations-sponsored globalist NGO" (Non-Governmental Organization). For well over 200 years Misprison of Treason has stood to place burden on public officials to report any and all treasonous acts to the appropriate authority if witness to same. Failure to do so is an act of Misprison of Treason. Our public officials are more than witness, they are actively complicit and continue to be", says Bennett. He further states, "Using the word "alliance" to describe the active, accountable, secret relationship with this United Nations-sponsored NGO, would understate the civil dynamic shared by communities engaged in an ICLEI Charter".

"The verbiage and spirit contained in this section of the law early in our Constitution was without doubt to prevent exactly what we have happening in communities across the Nation right now... Interests foreign to our government and our Constitution insidiously undermining the sovereignty and principles of our Republic", says Bennett. "ICLEI is an acronym for International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. Since 2003, this group based in Bonn, Germany has also adopted the name Local Governments for Sustainability. Evidently, the international part was too telling", says Bennett.

According to ICLEI's own material the group's purpose involves members in the implementation of U.N. Agenda 21 Sustainable Development on a local level. U.N. Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action employing extreme environmentalism that George Bush Sr. (41) took the unauthorized liberty of signing our country up for at the United Nations sponsored '92 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Bennett says, "It was a treaty, considered 'soft law' so it didn't require Congressional or Senate approval. This Plan is a multi-faceted blueprint to impose a One World Government on our planet. Drafted by globalists, it would ultimately provide for dominance by a chosen few, themselves. As Americans, we've always been blessed. We have thrived within the most divine, admired, successful societal framework ever conceived; The Constitution. Oppression was always something imposed on less fortunate, in books, movies other places, times or on The History Channel. Our Constitution is unique, paying homage to individual freedoms. The cornerstones that keep our foundation intact are property rights, which as many of you know speak to much more than our real estate, free market capitalism, our natural, individual and unalienable rights, which are inherently ours and not to be granted by or reconciled through government. With their ICLEI membership intact in cities like Cotati, we are in effect paying our public officials to implement an Agenda that has been socially engineered to topple all these cornerstones and incrementally reduce citizens essentially to serfs. Furthermore, the Agenda seeks to impose a 'Smart Growth' hard-landscape which ultimately would provide for our containment, surveillance, control and a forfeit our choices in terms of where and how we live, and our transportation options."

Bennett went on to say that the ideology that our public officials have subscribed to has all the earmarks of oppression. Taking pages from past oppressive societies. All implemented under a 'green guise' of extreme environmentalism, and the U.N. contrived pseudo-science that is anthropogenic 'global warming'. "This is where the preoccupation with the nonsensical Smart Train and reconfiguring our roadways with deference to bicycles comes from", said Bennett. "This is where your highly controversial, uncalled-for 'Roundabout Redevelopment Plan or DSP in Cotati came from. The 'Traffic Calming' 'Road Diets' that choke streets and frustrate motorists and shoppers alike that Cotati city manager Diane Thompson calls for at the request of the city council are all based on this Agenda and illegal alliance with the UN. It's also where the local government's defunding of 85% of our rural roads comes from", says Bennett. The over-reaching regulatory policies sabotaging small business and undermining our property rights are a direct result of adhering to this Agenda and implementing ICLEI's ideology.

Ever wonder why it's so difficult to pull a permit to improve YOUR property? Why is it that local governments implement such regulatory overreach on small business owners and homeowners in the worst economy of our lives? Because these city governments are adherent to ICLEI's oppressive blueprint. ICLEI provides a complete municipal model, software, procedure, statutes, training, everything. If your local government seems to be out of step with your needs, almost like they're marching to the beat of a different drummer, now you know

why - ICLEI, says Bennett.

He goes on to say, "ICLEI has subverted the central dynamic of public service by incentivizing our public officials outside our accepted civil mechanisms. It is like a foreign government within our government! If it increasingly feels like they don't work for you anymore, it's because in effect, they do not. They have to operate in an insidious, deceptive manner because if you all knew what this Agenda represented to your American Dream and your children's future, well, you'd be sharpening your pitchforks... Higher than market salaries and pensions help assure adherence, as do expensive uncalled for 'projects' and 'programs' perpetuating an over-bloated governmental bureaucracy that often seem unstoppable.

Cotati's 'Redevelopment' Plan embodied in The Cotati Downtown Specific Plan (which cost over a million dollars to produce and will cost \$73 million to build out) was an ICLEI directive and represents much of what the NGO is all about. Cotati residents unfortunately got a sense of the disconnect of which I speak and have put a measure on the upcoming ballot to outlaw roundabouts the city has no money to build. These types of 'visions', or nightmares as many call them, are happening across the nation. California is a leading template for the Agenda. That's why this desirable Sonoma County, seems to be a leading template for this government imposed ideology. It's happening all over, but there are communities fighting back and picking up steam"

People everywhere are waking up to this nightmare. Well over 50 communities across America have decided to disassociate themselves with ICLEI. Last week, the State of Alabama passed legislation forbidding any Agenda 21/ICLEI/Sustainable Development in their state. Another small California town; Colfax, CA dropped their ICLEI membership a few months ago and are proud of it. Early this year, the entire Republican National Committee unanimously passed a resolution to disassociate itself with this United Nations policy and ideology, citing misinformation and rhetoric from the UN's own material. For example; "The American way of life, including private property ownership, single family homes, private car ownership, individual travel choices and privately owned farms are "unsustainable" as they are deemed damaging to the environment, according to Agenda 21 ideology.

You see, according to these global elitists who are behind this comprehensive Plan: "Land...cannot be treated as an ordinary asset, controlled by individuals". They contend that private land ownership is also a principal instrument of accumulation and concentration of wealth and therefore contributes to 'social injustice'. Further stating that "public control of land use is therefore indispensable". As we know, this Agenda fundamentally flies in the face of our Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, our founding documents, principles, the societal framework that we must obey if we value our freedoms. George Washington said that "Private Property and Freedom are inseparable". Do you property owners on Old Redwood Hwy. Feel like City Hall values your property rights? Many don't, and have pulled back their projects to build seeing the handwriting on the wall that the Agenda itself is not sustainable, and will damage our community and our small town way of life.

"It's hard for us to believe that our trusted public officials would be complicit in something as sinister as this", Bennett said. "We will put Cotati, Board of Supervisors all the other towns in Sonoma County on notice, remind them of their oath, who they should work for, and insist they drop their membership to this oppressive organization. It's like they are members of a religious cult and their constituents are outsiders... There is talk among citizen groups that Cotati should be next. I think when your town flies the U.N. Flag just below the American flag, it is symbolic of what is happening".

Bennett stated that after years of studying Agenda 21 he would sum it up like this. It's a complete plan for complete control. Providing for a comprehensive inventory and control over all land, water, resources, energy consumption, education, development, all vegetation, agriculture, animals, all information and technology, and yes, even human beings. Their plan is outlined in detail in their 400 page, 30 chapter book; U.N. Agenda 21 Sustainable Development. It represents a level of control and oppression on a scale we've never seen before and eventually reducing our actions and consumption to a kind of commodity to be reconciled through, and granted by, the state.

I know that for many this is very difficult to wrap your head around and accept. However, increasingly Americans know in their heart that something is terribly wrong. Especially those who are prolific in real estate, small business, or agriculture. Americans know that a less than genuine effort is being set forth to look after our well being and our property rights. The tail is wagging the proverbial dog. Oppressive societies generally force containment of the people. These tyrants want us stacked and packed in Smart Growth 'Transit Villages' next to rail. Oppressive societies historically force people into dense housing provisions so as to be more easily controlled. These tyrants don't want the populace, who frankly they regard as cattle, spread out across the landscape. That's like herding cats. They want us out of our cars, out of single family homes, out of private businesses, out of choices and out of money and everything else we hold so dear. These traditional pillars of American life represent freedom and independence. I suppose the basic tenet being that a desperate, impoverished citizen will go along with things an successful one simply won't. Oppression. For me, it is still less than comfortable associating that word with our Country. However, this Agenda contains all the earmarks. The only thing different is the high-tech component of the Plan.

I asked Bennett to point out some of the Agenda's instruments and characteristics. He said, "...Most every-

thing is rooted in either an environmental 'problem' or lack and shortages, most always contrived, orchestrated or engineered". In a city that is engaged in an ICLEI Charter, all of the traditional domains of government that we were taught in civics class are being cut back, privatized, taxed redundantly, or being eliminated. However, there is always funding and endless resolve for ICLEI imposed projects, programs and Smart Growth hard-landscape. That which has always been private domain is often monopolized through 'Public-Private Partnerships', 'Stake-Holders', with government picking winners and losers in what was previously a free market landscape with few regulations and restrictions. Here are some characteristics of an ICLEI local government: 1. Social engineering and behavior modification under the guise of environmental, 'greenhouse gas' and/or 'climate protection'. 2. Ever-increasing regulation and restrictions. Over-reaching code enforcement, planning departments. 3. Managed control over your life and Freedoms. 4. Deliberate traffic congestion and parking shenanigans. Anti-automobile planning. 5. Empowerment of councils, installed 'neighborhood groups', non-elected decision making, various artificial 'consensus' building (search: Delphi Technique). Important issues not being taken to vote. 6. Less than bona fide efforts to keep citizens informed on important issues, decisions.

7. Mismanagement, misappropriation and private collusion of public utility, parks and public facilities. 8. High density 'Smart Growth' and 'Affordable housing' schemes. 9. A constant undermining of rural, country and agricultural lifestyle and property. 10. Various manipulations, acquisitions as to restrict public access to open space, state parks, rural areas. 11. Zoning changes without proper notification. 12. An adoption of a Soviet model of governance employing councils, 'neighborhood groups' and officials chosen based on their compliance, adherence and willingness to implement a predetermined outcome. A one-mindedness with the group of allegiance. Regionalism, like district elections and One Bay Area are also part of a Soviet model, contributing to a more disenfranchised populace.

Because ICLEI Charters with cities are on shaky ground legally and the wildfire of negative attention right now, local governments have recently began telling activists that they have dropped their ICLEI membership.

"That is often a big lie", says Bennett. He goes on by saying "Unless there's a binding legal resolution, regulation, charter amendment or legislation on a state level concerned citizens should disregard these misleading claims. Santa Rosa City Manager, Kathy Millison formally stated to me in an e-mail that the city has dropped their ICLEI membership and stopped paying the dues. I just disregarded it as meaningless", said Bennett. "In fact the catalyst that finally galvanized our decision to serve Santa Rosa with notice of a crime was the 231 page 'Climate Action Plan' Santa Rosa adopted. This Plan is yet another typical ICLEI overreaching directive which is filled with disturbing new implementation guidelines."

The most noteworthy part of the Climate Action Plan seeks to ban natural gas (propane) and gasoline powered appliances of any kind, HVAC systems, gas powered lawn equipment and this applies to industrial applications as well. This could be the knockout punch for many homeowners as the cost of new equipment and electrical service panel upgrades could ruin them financially. What if you own an apartment buildings or small manufacturing facility? The expense of such major upgrades will surely translate to higher rents and cost of goods for us all. Inflation will surely follow.

This is typical of ICLEI sabotage that we pay our public officials to damage us with.

More information can be found at:

Freedom Advocates.com, or look at the work of local fellow activist, Rosa Koire. Less than a year ago, she released a book called Behind the Green Mask, UN Agenda 21



She's being invited to speak all over the country as more and more Americans 'connect the dots'. An easy to read, casual narrative from the perspective of a local citizen, property owner, activist/researcher. Her web sites are: DemocratsAgainstUNAgenda 21.com

See also: SantaRosaNeighborhoodCoalition.com

It is important that we educate ourselves on the crises of our time, organize and rid this societal cancer from our County. Jim Bennett is a local businessman, owner of a retail business and a community center in Santa Rosa. If you'd like to get involved and/or join his citizen group that meets every other Saturday night contact Jim at: jamber143@yahoo.com He and other activists will be working with other citizens in Sonoma County to put their own city hall's on notice of their serious transgression and the detriment our republic.

Remember Who Demanded Roundabouts Will Be Built in the Center of DOWNTOWN Cotati



John Dell 'Osso



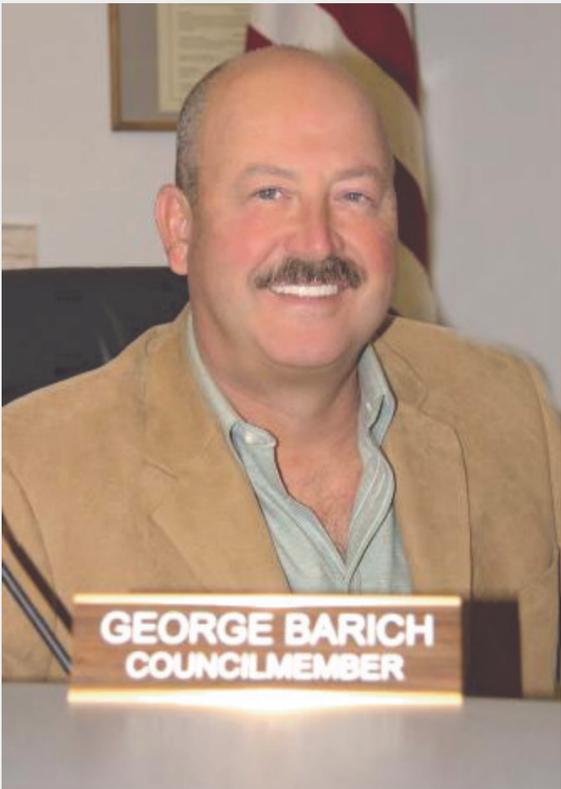
Susan Harvey



Janet Orchard

These People are Out of Money, Out of Realistic Ideas, and Out of Their Minds!

“Remember Who Voted Against Roundabouts and the Silly \$73 Million Cotati Downtown Specific Plan” Councilman, George Barich



Cotati has not one dime budgeted for roundabouts. Yet, city officials claim they will find the money somewhere and are defiant. Do they think we are fools?

It will take another twenty years to pay off our 22 million dollar Cotati police station because they borrowed, rather than saved. Who are they kidding ?

This city council refuses to televise the city council meetings. Yet the money given to the city by the cable company to do it has been sitting in the budget for nine years doing nothing despite my complaints they put the system in for the sake of the citizens. They don't want to be televised and want to keep Cotati citizens like you in the dark as much as possible. Their track record proves it.



Let's get Cotati back on track

It's time for real leadership

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